

Healthy Children, Healthy Weights

Policy, System and Environmental Change to Prevent Childhood Obesity

Columbus Public Health – Columbus, OH

Introduction

The percentage of adults affected by obesity (30.7%) in Franklin County and the City of Columbus is higher than the national average (27.6%). The national cost of obesity-related illness is substantial, costing over \$190 billion – or almost 21% of annual medical spending in the U.S. Childhood obesity alone is responsible for \$14 billion in direct medical costs nationally. The Early Care and Education (ECE) setting is an opportune place for childhood obesity prevention efforts as children are increasingly seen in these environments. Despite this trend, the inclusion of childhood obesity prevention standards in state regulations of licensed child care facilities has been insufficient. As a result, Healthy Children, Healthy Weights (HCHW) has worked since 2004 with almost 250 child care centers to implement healthy eating and physical activity (HEAL), impacting more than an estimated 13,000 children.

Program Objectives

- The program is designed to improve healthy eating and activity in ECE centers using the following objectives:
- Provide 15-hour curriculum to increase ECE center staff knowledge and skill in encouraging healthy habits in young children.
 - Create sustainable environmental changes by implementing HEAL policies at ECE centers.
 - Facilitate improvements of the nutritional quality and variety of meals and snacks provided to children.
 1. At least one whole grain food daily
 2. Only cereals with 6g or less of sugar per dry ounce
 3. A different non-fried vegetable each day of the week
 4. A different whole fruit each day of the week
 5. No more than 4-6 fl. oz. of 100% juice per day
 6. Only beverages with no added sugar/sweeteners
 7. Fried foods no more than once a week
 8. None of the following highly processed meats: corn dogs, hot dogs, frankfurters, bologna, pepperoni, polish sausage, salami, summer sausage and liverwurst.
 - Encourage effective parent participation to establish healthy habits among children, families and staff.

Implementation

- Available to ECE centers in the City of Columbus:
- Three on-site visits by a registered dietitian or dietetic technician
 - Healthy Menus and Policies
 - Family Engagement
 - 15-Hour Healthy Habits Curriculum for center directors and staff

Approximate cost is \$4,300 for one ECE center to complete technical assistance and training curriculum to apply for the Ohio Healthy Program Designation (OHP).

HCHW Timeline

2004	• Program is created
2005	• Program is focus grouped, then piloted in 10 head start centers • Awarded a National Association of County and City Health Officials (NACCHO) Model Practice Award
2008	• Awarded as an evidence-based, theory-sound program from the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention and Robert Wood Johnson
2009	• The Growing Healthy Kids Columbus Coalition is convened
2010	• Program is updated to use a policy system and environmental change model • With funding from the Ohio Department of Health (ODH), HCHW partners with the Ohio Child Care Resource and Referral Association (OCCRRA) to model state wide designation, Ohio Healthy Programs
2012	• HCHW creates the Family Engagement Handbook with awarded funds from the NACCHO ACHIEVE Grant
2014	• ODH funds OCCRRA and Creating Healthy Communities to take HCHW and OHP statewide via Creating Healthy Communities counties • The 15-hour HCHW curriculum is designated by ODH as an approved Early Childhood Nutrition Education Curriculum
2015	• Curriculum and menu requirements updated to align with 2015 Dietary Guidelines for Americans
2016	• New information added to curriculum regarding Adverse Childhood Experiences Study (ACES) to make it trauma-informed • Children’s Hunger Alliance (CHA) adapts the HCHW curriculum for ECE home providers.

Table 1.

Stakeholders

- In addition to valuable partnerships with ECE centers in Columbus, program success also has been attributed to key partnerships with community stakeholders and organizations:
- Ohio Department of Health
 - Cardinal Health Foundation
 - The Ohio State University
 - Ohio Child Care Resource and Referral Association (OCCRRA)
 - Columbus City Schools
 - YMCA of Central Ohio
 - Franklin County Family and Children First Council

Accomplishments



Figure 1. Accomplishments from 2015-2016

Next Steps

Through statewide expansion of HCHW through the Ohio Healthy Programs designation, the 15-hour HCHW curriculum has reached 73 out of 88 Ohio Counties. Additionally, 1,203 HEAL policies have been implemented by ECE providers across Ohio.

Current and future projects for the HCHW program include: updating curriculum and menu requirements to align with nutrition standard changes in the Child and Adult Care Food Program; the conversion of curriculum to an online delivery model; expansion of curriculum to meet needs of afterschool providers; and, incorporation of Farm to ECE efforts in technical assistance and curriculum.

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